

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 11859 120217Z

64

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 IO-03 PM-03 DODE-00

DPW-01 PRS-01 DRC-01 /056 W
----- 112962

O R 111105Z SEP 74 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8585
INFO CINCPAC
USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 11859

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, VS
SUBJ: ANTI-CORRUPTION FRONT DEMONSTRATION IN HUE

1. FOLLOWING REPORT RECEIVED FROM CONGEN DANANG.
 2. ON SUNDAY, SEPT 8, THE CATHOLIC-DOMINATED PEOPLE'S ANTI-CORRUPTION MOVEMENT ORGANIZED A DEMONSTRATION IN HUE TO KICK OFF ITS CAMPAIGN IN CENTRAL VIETNAM. THE DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE IN SEVERAL STAGES. AT 1400 HOURS, A GROUP ESTIMATED AT APPROXIMATELY 500 PERSONS, LED BY FATHER TRAN HUU THANH, ATTEMPTED TO MARCH FROM PHU CAM PHUONG TO THE CENTRAL AREA OF TOWN BUT WERE DISPERSED BY POLICE THROWING TEAR GAS GRENADES. A SECOND DEMONSTRATION WAS REPORTEDLY ALSO DISPERSED BY TEAR GAS AT 1500 HOURS NEAR PROVINCE HIGH SCHOOL ON NGUYEN HUE STREET.
 3. FATHER THANH READ AN "INDICTMENT NUMBER ONE", ATTACKING PRESIDENT THIEU FOR VARIOUS CRIMES AND ACTS OF CORRUPTION AT A RALLY AT 1600 HOURS. THIS ATTACK FOLLOWED SPEECHES BY LOCAL POLITICIANS CRITICIZING THUA THIEN PROVINCE CHIEF TON THAT KHEIU FOR TEAR-GASSING "INNOCENT CATHOLICS" EARLIER IN THE DAY. AT THE SAME TIME 500-600 PERSONS ATTEMPTING TO MARCH INTO THE CITY
- CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 11859 120217Z

FROM THE OUTSKIRTS WERE TURNED BACK BY POLICE WHO WERE STATIONED

IN FORCE THROUGHOUT THE CITY ON ALL APPROACHES.

4. CONGEN REPORTS FIRST CROWD APPEARED ORDERLY AND BELIEVES CROWD CONTROL MEASURES WERE UNNECESSARY. THEY WERE REPORTEDLY UNDERTAKEN AT LOCAL INITIATIVE BUT AFTER REGIONAL NATIONAL POLICE HQ REFUSED PROVIDE GUIDANCE. ONLY INJURIES REPORTED AS RESULTING FROM DEMONSTRATION WERE CAUSED BY TEAR GAS INHALATION, WITH A FEW PERSONS REPORTEDLY HOSPITALIZED.

5. VENERABLE THICH THANH TRI, HUE BUDDHIST LEADER, TOLD CONGEN VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEE THAT HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY CATHOLICS REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN ANTI-CORRUPTION DEMONSTRATION BUT SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS NOT PROPER TO HOLD SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS AT THIS TIME WITH THE CURRENT CRITICAL MILITARY SITUATION. SOME REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET LEADERS, HOWEVER, DID PARTICIPATE IN THIS PREDOMINANTLY CATHOLIC EVENT.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT: THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION CAMPAIGN LAST REPORTED IN SAIGON 11053. FATHER THANH'S CHARGES ARE SENSATIONAL, VITRIOLIC AND EXTREME IN NATURE. THEY ARE CARELESSLY DRAWN AND WIRE SERVICE REPORTS EXAGGERATE AND TEND TO BLOW THEM OUT OF PROPORTION. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT ELEMENTS IN THE CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP ARE SEEKING TO PLACE SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN ITSELF AND PRESIDENT THIEU. IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, THAT THE BULK OF THE CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP WOULD SUPPORT SUCH SWEEPING CHARGES AGAINST THIEU AS THOSE VOICED BY THANH. SENATOR HUYNH VAN CAO TELS US THAT SEVERAL CATHOLIC BISHOPS, INCLUDING ARCHBISHOP BINH, INFORMED HIM AND OTHER SENATORS AT A RECENT MEETING THAT THEY DID NOT WISH TO SEE CORRUPTION USED AS POLITICAL ISSUE AGAINST THIEU. (TWO OTHER PROMINENT CATHOLIC LAYMEN HAVE TOLD EMBASSY THEY FEEL THANH'S CHARGES HAVE GONE MUCH TOO FAR. THANH MAY NOT PROVE THAT EASY TO TURN OFF, HOWEVER, SINCE THE EXTREMELY TIGHT ECONOMIC SITUATION AND MILITARY AID STRINGENCIES MAKE CORRUPTION A SENSITIVE SUBJECT.)

7. MEANWHILE THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN TOLD RECENTLY BY PRO-GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO LIBERALIZATION OF DECREE LAWS 007 (PRESS) AND 060 (POLITICAL PARTIES). THIEU IS ALSO PROCEEDING WITH HIS OWN ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS, AS SHOWN BY THE RECENT DISMISSAL OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 11859 120217Z

GENERALS LE VAN TU AND TRAN QUOC LICH. HOWEVER, WE FEAR THAT THE EXTREME METHODS BEING RESORTED TO BY FATHER THANH'S GROUP WILL COMPLICATE AND COULD IMPEDE CARRYING OUT OF ANY REFORMS GVN PLANNING.

8. STATE 198879 JUST RECEIVED AND EMBASSY WILL COMMENT FURTHER BY SEPTTEL.
LEHMANN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, CORRUPTION, CATHOLICS, SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SAIGON11859
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740254-0041
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740955/aaaabuup.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 APR 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <13 MAR 2003 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANTI-CORRUPTION FRONT DEMONSTRATION IN HUE
TAGS: PINT, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005